

## SAW MIRAGE ON SIDEWALK

College Professor Reports Interesting Observation He Made on the Streets of a City.

A curious case of sidewalk mirage was described by Prof. F. W. McNair of Michigan College of Mining. Prof. McNair wrote in Science:

"I was walking eastward on a cement sidewalk on a street running nearly east and west, and moving up a moderate grade which joins a nearly level stretch of walk. On reaching a point which brought my eye slightly above the level portion, and at which normally the level stretch would have been seen in its entire length, but much foreshortened, I observed instead what appeared to be a stretch of clear dark water covering the entire width of the walk and brilliantly reflecting moving persons and other objects in sight beyond it.

"The sky was clear, the air cool, the sun high. It was about 3 o'clock p. m., local time. There was a moderate breeze. The angle of observation was very small, probably not above three degrees. A step or two either east or west, and the water was gone, but within the proper limits, the illusion was definite and continuing. The weather bureau report for the day indicated that approximately 30 feet above the spot where the mirage was observed the air temperature was about 60 degrees F. and the humidity about 63 degrees."

The resemblance between conditions here described and those which produce the mirage on the plains is obvious.

## BELIEVE DEVIL RULES EARTH

Probably Queerest Religious Faith Is That of Tribe of Kurdish and Arabian Blood.

One of the strangest religious sects in the world is known as the Yezidi, a race of mixed Kurdish and Arabian blood. They worship the devil, and believe he will rule the earth for 10,000 years, 4,000 of this number having already passed. On the theory that Jesus is good, and will not harm them, they give most of their devotion and sacrifice to the devil who, they assert, will at the end of the next 6,000 years, be put into hell, where he will weep so hard he will put out the fires, and then will be pardoned and given back his rightful place in heaven.

The Yezidi believe that there were 71 Adams and a similar number of Eves, and that the originals once had a great dispute as to who was the most important, the man or the woman. To prove the matter the women split in one great jar and the men in another, and the jars were sealed for nine months. At the end of that period they were opened, and from the women's jar leaped a pile of snakes and worms, while from the men's jar came a beautiful boy and girl. In spite of their strange beliefs they are very industrious, honest, hospitable and kindly, although steeped in dense ignorance, one phase of their religion forbidding them to learn letters.

### Words in English Language.

The number of English words not yet obsolete, but found in good authors, or in approved usage by correct speakers, including the nomenclature of science and the arts, does not probably fall short of 100,000, says George Perkins Marsh. Few writers or speakers use as many as 10,000 words, ordinary persons of fair intelligence not above 3,000 or 4,000. If a scholar were to be required to name, without examination, the authors whose English vocabulary was the largest, he would specify the all-embracing Shakespeare, and the all-knowing Milton. And yet in all the works of the great dramatist there seem not more than 15,000 words; in the poems of Milton not above 8,000. The whole number of Egyptian hieroglyphic symbols does not exceed 800, and the entire Italian vocabulary is said to be scarcely more extensive.

### Egg Shows Miracle.

One cannot find among the multitude of wonders in nature anything more marvelous than the development of an egg, writes Elsa G. Allen, in the American Forestry Magazine. Whether it be a butterfly which flourishes for a day, only to die after depositing its eggs, or a reptile which lazily leaves its eggs with only the warm sand to mother them, or a fish, like the salmon, which with incredible strength, jumps the rapids to spawn in the upper reaches of rivers, or most appealing of all a bird which builds a beautiful nest for its treasures, the egg in every case is structurally the same, and the miracle of life unfolds according to the same laws of cell division.

### Modern Words Traced to Trees.

While the ancient Greeks fancied that every tree was possessed of its own peculiar spirit, and nature lovers insist that trees have personalities even as men and women, it is only natural that men have paid tribute to the tree. The leaves of plants named the leaves of books, and the word "folio" traces back to "foliage." The word paper comes from the old papyrus plant, and the word "Bible" is the Greek name of the plant, according to the Minneapolis Journal. The word "book" is derived from "beech," and the "codex" originally meant tree trunk. It is because men have found the trees kind friends and interesting subjects that they have been paid so much tribute.

## CHARM OF HOUSE OF LORDS

Upper Chamber of the British Parliament Well Worth a Visit From the Traveler.

As the ordinary stranger takes his seat in the gallery and surveys the house of lords, he sees much to charm his eye, to kindle his imagination, and even to stimulate his sense of reverence, writes a correspondent of the London Times. He feels humbled, if not intimidated by the almost religious solemnity of the place. It is glowing in gold and colors. All the glory of the "tiger moth's deep damasked wings" gleams in its splendid decorations. Yet there is nothing gorgeous in the scene. The subdued light of a cathedral—"dim and yellow," as Shelley found it in Milan—prevails, transforming things that might otherwise strike upon the senses as garish into a delight to the eye, and an inspiration to the mind. Everything heightens the impression that one is in the beautiful chapel of an ancient cathedral rather than in a modern legislative chamber.

The lofty stained-glass windows have blue and crimson figures of the kings and queens of England. Most of them were worldly minded men and women, but like saints they look in their antique garments, and the seeming of rapt meditation and ecstatic introspection on their faces. Between the windows are pedestals on which stand large bronze statues of knights in armor, grave and stern of aspect, leaning on their naked swords and lances. They recall times when the battle of principles was fought not with words of subtle-minded and ready-tongued men in frock coat and silk hat, but with sword and battle axe, wielded by brawny soldiers on prancing steeds.

## FOUGHT WAR OVER LAP DOG

Matter of History That Conflict Between the Florentines and Citizens of Pisa Began Thus.

One of the bitterest of the minor wars of history was fought over a lap dog. In the thirteenth century a Florentine emissary attending the coronation ceremonies of Frederick II saw and admired a lap dog belonging to a cardinal. The church official, noting the admiration, promptly assured the Florentine that the dog was his, and the emissary agreed to send for it. The ambassador from Pisa saw and admired the same dog, and was just as promptly promised it on the morrow. Both men sent for the dog, but the Florentine's servant, being first, carried it away. The citizens of Rome, hearing of the incident, began to joke about it, and the visiting Florentines were especially vicious about the matter. Street fights began and when news of the affair reached Pisa the citizens seized all the Florentine shipping in the bay.

The war that followed was first of a series that ended with Pisa falling before the triumphant Florentines, and the beginning of the wane of her power. The famous leaning tower of Pisa was only one skyscraper of a score or more, although the others have long since crumbled down. These towers proved valuable in the attacks of the Florentine army, but one by one were overcome, and the first city of the world to have a skyscraper skyline lost its unique standing.

### No Snakes in Ireland.

It is said that there are no snakes in Ireland, but the story that they were driven out by St. Patrick is probably based more on hearsay than historical evidence. The phrase "Concerning Snakes in Ireland," is frequently quoted in connection with the above story, but the phrase is itself a misquotation and had in reality nothing to do with snakes in Ireland. The original phrase does not refer to Ireland at all, but to Iceland. In a translation of Harebone's works, "The Natural History of Iceland," published in London in 1758, chapter 42 is headed "Concerning Owls," and is as follows: "There are no owls of any kind in the whole island." Chapter 72 is entitled "Concerning Snakes," and the entire chapter is as follows: "No snakes of any kind are to be met with throughout the whole of the island." The application of the phrase to Ireland probably at first arose from a printer's error.—New Orleans Times-Picayune.

### The Printing Telegraph.

During the five-year period 1912-1917, the printing telegraph came into extended use by telegraph companies, press associations and railroads. The printing telegraph consists essentially of a sending instrument, equipped with a keyboard similar to that of a typewriter, electrically connected with a receiving instrument in such a manner that the latter automatically reproduces what is typewritten on the sending instrument. Without the printing telegraph it would have been difficult or impossible to handle the increased telegraph business during the great war.

### Edible Oysters in Solid Rock.

Edible oysters that live with their shells imbedded in solid rock, like the fossil of some extinct creatures, have been discovered in Coos bay, Oregon. The fact that they are fairly abundant makes these strange mollusks no less a curiosity, and the university of the state is now engaged in a study of their origin and mode of life. Because they are considered an exceptionally delicious food, the investigators are also examining into the possibility of their propagation for the market.

### Sex of an Egg.

Various methods have been tried, and according to the Paris Academy of Science the sex of eggs laid by pure-bred fowls may be determined by weight and size. A test well known in the north of Scotland is to hold the egg in the left hand in the sun or close to an electric or gas light. Shade the end of the egg with the right hand, and look for the air space or "setting" (a dark watery spot larger than a dime); if this is found on the top it is a male, but if lower down the side it is a female egg.

## WORSE THAN ANCIENT FORMS

Oldtime Ordeals by Fire and Water Declared Eclipsed by That of Modern Travel.

Those who opine that the widely advertised ordeals and trials of the olden days were the only stonem-pure specimens have another opine coming to them. Their opiners, I may say, are badly out of kilter, writes Kenneth L. Roberts in the Saturday Evening Post. There was a time when I could shudder as with the palsy at some of the trials upon which mankind deliberately embarked before the old world had become as shopworn as it now is; but now that I have looked more deeply into the matter I can't get a shudder out of any of them.

They weren't genuine, blown-in-the-glass articles at all. Anybody could beat the game. There was always a little shop up an alley where for a certain consideration one could buy fireproofing material guaranteed to carry him safely through trial by fire, or an imitation stomach which could be lowered cunningly down the throat so that trial by poison could be safely negotiated, or asbestos paint of such potency that after three coats had been applied to the soles of the feet the owner of the feet could not only skip lightly across nine red-hot plowshares, but could even do a marathon on them if the occasion demanded it.

No; the gentlemen back in the dark ages who went through fire and water in order to demonstrate their worthiness to tall willowy blonds who lived in unheated stone castles and were therefore subject to inflammatory rheumatism were not so hardy and reckless as some people suppose. And there is a present-day trial which makes those cleverly pressed agents trials of the moldy past look rickety and undernourished and nauseated. I refer to that celebrated European ordeal known as trial by travel.

## FORCED TO RENEW LEARNING

Mrs. Minerva Jones and Her Unfortunate Instructor Both Played in Hard Luck.

In attending the Americanization class Mrs. Minerva Jones had one object, and one only. She wanted to learn to write her name. For a time all effort seemed futile, and the painstaking and conscientious teacher was on the verge of despair; but at last patience had its reward, and toward the end of the course Minerva was able to trace laboriously but proudly the magic symbols. Then she rested on her laurels. The exhausted teacher heaved a sigh of relief as the door closed on Minerva's portly form.

"I feel that I have not acted in vain, but I should hate to go through that again," she said to one of the assistants.

At the beginning of the next term, much to the astonishment of all, Minerva again presented herself, bland and smiling as usual.

"Well, Minerva, what can we do for you?"

The instructor endeavored to speak cheerfully.

"I've done come to learn to write my name, Miss Mary," announced Minerva complacently.

"But you learned how to do that last term, Minerva. You surely haven't forgotten so soon."

Minerva smiled broadly. "No, I ain't forgot, Miss Mary, but I've done changed my name since then. I'm Mrs. Ephraim Jackson now."—Youth's Companion.

### When Laundry Traveled Far.

No present-day washing bills reach the figures attained by such documents in the days when people went far afield to ensure good laundry work. French exquisites of the court of Henry III had their washing done in Holland, where the soft water of the dykes was supposed to impart a special gloss to linen.

Apparently this practice lasted until the close of the eighteenth century, for Sebastien Mercier, in his "Tableau de Paris," published shortly before the French revolution, protests against the patronage by rich people of the Dutch, to the exclusion of native, laundresses. Still more remarkable is the fact, mentioned in the "Memoirs du Comte de Vaubians," that wealthy merchants in Bordeaux used to send their linen all the way to San Domingo to be washed.

### The Philosopher.

Those who belong to this small class have tasted how sweet and blessed a possession philosophy is and have also seen and been satisfied of the madness of the multitude and know that there is no one who acts honestly in the administration of states, nor any helper who will save anyone who maintains the cause of the just. And he reflects upon all this and holds his peace and does his own business. He is content if only he can live his own life and be pure from evil or unrighteousness and depart in peace and good will with bright hopes.—Plato.

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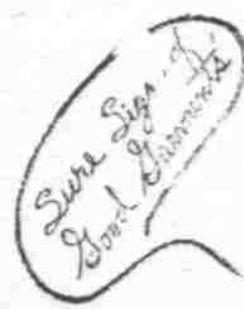
## Tobacco Men to Meet.

There will be a meeting of the Burley Tobacco Growers' Association of Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Virginia and West Virginia at Lexington on December 1, when the matter of disposing of the crop will be considered. This is expected to record the first selling of any great amount of the weed. Plans for the disposal of the weed will be suggested, and there will be a uniform manner in which all will be given an assurance of the best price obtainable. The organization continues to grow, a number of counties in eastern states asking admittance, and it is probable that the extent of the association will be greatly widened before the date of the next meeting.

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